

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 04271 261002Z
ACTION NEA-10

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AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
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USMISSION USUN NY
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, SY, LE
SUBJECT: SYRIA REAFFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO WITHDRAW EVENTUALLY
FROM LEBANON

1. SUMMARY: KHADDAM AND SYRIAN EDITORIAL CLAIM SYRIA WISHES
TO PULL OUT OF LEBANON AT THE EARLIEST PRACTICABLE MOMENT.
SYRIA IS AGAIN URGING THE DESPATCH OF LEBANESE ARMED FORCES
TO THE SOUTH. RIGHTIST MILITIAS ARE BLAMED FOR THE FIGHTING
AROUND THE AL-HADATH AREA OF BEIRUT IN EFFORT TO THWART
GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO SEND ITS FORCES SOUTHWARD. TISHRIIN
EDITOR WARNS THAT EVEN ISRAEL CANNOT "PROTECT THOSE
WHO STAND IN THE WAY OF LEBANON'S NATIONAL FUTURE." END
SUMMARY

2. WHILE SYRIAN OFFICIALS AND MEDIA CONTINUE TO ATTACK
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 04271 261002Z

AND CRITICIZE HARSHLY THE RIGHTIST LEBANESE MILITIAS,
INCREASED SENSITIVITY IS BEING SHOWN TO CHARGES THAT SYRIA
SEEKS HEGEMONY IN LEBANON. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT
LE JOUR OF JULY 23, KHADDAM STATED DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO
COPENHAGEN THAT THE COST OF MAINTAINING THE ADF IN LEBANON
IS \$70 MILLION MONTHLY. HE DECLARED THAT
THE ONLY REASON FOR KEEPING THEM THERE IS TO ENSURE THE

INTEGRITY OF THE COUNTRY AND SAID IT WAS SYRIA'S WISH TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE CLAIMED THAT IT WOULD BE AN EASY DECISION FOR SYRIA TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM LEBANON BUT PREDICTED THAT WARFARE WOULD BREAK OUT ONLY MINUTES AFTER THEIR WITHDRAWAL AND LAST FOR TEN YEARS WITH THE COUNTRY LOOKING FOR A SAVIOR WHO WOULD NOT APPEAR BECAUSE ONLY SYRIA WAS CAPABLE OF HALTING THE COMBAT. THESE REMARKS HAVE NOT BEEN CARRIED BY SYRIAN MEDIA BUT TISHRIIN EDITORIAL OF JULY 25 ECHOES THIS REFRAIN.

3. EDITORIAL ASSERTS: "SYRIA IS EAGER TO KEEP ITS FORCES IN LEBANON ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT IT CAN HELP THE BROTHER REGION TO REALIZE PEACE AND SECURITY. ...SYRIA WILL NOT HESITATE TO WITHDRAW ITS FORCES FROM LEBANON THE MINUTE THE LEGITIMATE LEBANESE AUTHORITY BECOMES CAPABLE OF ENSURING LEBANON'S SAFETY AND SECURITY. UNTIL THIS OCCURS, SYRIAN FORCES WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THEIR CAPACITY AS A FORCE UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY... NOBODY---NEITHER ISRAEL NOR THOSE IN COLLUSION WITH IT--WILL BE ABLE TO STIR UP AND CONTRIVE A LEBANESE-SYRIAN CONFLICT.."

4. SYRIAN PRESS IS AGAIN BEATING DRUMS FOR DESPATCH OF LEBANESE ARMED FORCES TO SOUTH LEBANON. THAWRA EDITORIAL ARGUES THAT THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES IN LEBANON ARE SECURITY CONDITIONS IN SOUTH LEBANON AND UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 DAMASC 04271 261002Z

BEIRUT. EDITORIAL CLAIMS THAT THE TWO ISSUES CANNOT BE SEPARATED AND THAT DELAY IN SETTling ONE AGGRAVATES THE OTHER. THE SOLUTION ACCORDING TO THAWRA IS "THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY AND STABILITY...(WHICH) REQUIRE THE PRESENCE OF THE REGULAR LEBANESE ARMY THROUGHOUT ALL AREAS OF LEBANON WITH THE SOUTH IN THE FOREFRONT...THIS MEANS UPROOTING THE ELEMENTS OF ANARCHY AND SUBVERSION."

5. THESE AFFIRMATIONS OF SUPPORT FOR THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ARE COUPLED WITH CONTINUING BITTERNESS DIRECTED TOWARD THE RIGHTIST MILITIAS. THAWRA HEADLINE SUMS UP THE MOOD BEING PROJECTED HERE: "MASS DRIVE UNDERWAY TO PURGE LEBANON OF PHALANGISTS AND CHAMOUNISTS..." AL-BAATH NEWSPAPER, WHICH STANDS ALONE IN CONSISTENTLY CLAIMING THAT EVENTS IN LEBANON ARE PART OF A U.S-ISRAELI-SADATI PLOT, IN REFERRING TO THE FIGHTING AROUND THE VILLAGE OF HADATH EDITORIALIZES THAT "WHAT OCCURRED YESTERDAY IN BEIRUT WAS PART OF THE ROLE OF THESE (RIGHTIST) GROUPS, FOR NO SOONER HAD THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED ITS READINESS TO DESPATCH REGULAR LEBANESE FORCES TO THE SOUTH IN IMPLEMENTING THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE LATAKIA SUMMIT AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION AND TO END THE

PHENOMENON OF COLLABORATION WITH THE ENEMY WHICH THE TWO AGENTS HADDAD AND SHIDIAC PRACTICE, THAN THE PHALANGIST AND CHAMOUNIST GANGS ATTEMPTED TO ENFLAME THE SITUATION IN A BEIRUT DISTRICT IN ORDER TO OBSTRUCT THE GOVERNMENT FROM TRYING TO CARRY OUT WHAT IT HAD RESOLVED TO DO.."

6. THE PRESS HAS NOT RESTRICTED ITSELF TO "EXPOSING" THE ROLE OF THE RIGHTIST MILITIAS BUT IS SERVING NOTICE THAT SYRIA IS PREPARED TO INCREASE ITS PRESSURE IF NECESSARY. TISHRIIN EDITOR AMID AL-KHULI ON JULY 22 IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL CHARACTERIZES MILITIA TACTICS AS "FASCIST" AND ARGUES THAT ISRAEL WILL USE THE MILITIAS TO ENFLAME THE SITUATION IN LEBANON. HE ADMONISHES THAT SYRIA WAS CAPABLE OF FOILING SADAT AND "HIS PLOTS" AND UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 DAMASC 04271 261002Z

"WILL NOT ALLOW THE PLOT IN LEBANON TO SUCCEED...ISRAEL ITSELF KNOWS THAT IT CANNOT PROTECT THOSE WHO STAND IN THE WAY OF REALIZING LEBANON'S NATIONAL FUTURE."
PELLETREAU

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